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ABSTRACT

This booklet presents summaries of the 35 projects funded by the National Institute for Literacy in 1992. Each summary provides the project's purpose, findings, products, and contact person with address and telephone number. These projects are included: Adult Literacy in the United States; Cognitive Skills-Based Instruction and Assessment; Hmong Adult Literacy Project; Hmong/English Bilingual Adult Literacy; Project ESL [English as a Second Language] Consortium; Quincy School Community Council Take and Give Program; Effective Community Based Family Literacy; Family Literacy Demonstration Project; Intergenerational Family Literacy; Learning with East Aurora Families (LEAF) Project; Literacy Is for Everyone (LIFE); Native American Parents as Teachers of Their Children; Open Doors Program; Parents and Preschoolers Intergenerational Literacy Project; Project PALS (Parenting and Literacy Skills); Reading Rainbow: Creating Families of Readers; Relationships between Parental Literacy Skills and Children's Ability to Learn Literacy Skills; "A Feel for Books" Program Effectiveness Study; Demonstration and Documentation of Strategies, Methodologies, and Tools for Literacy Programs Serving Native Americans; LEAD 2000 (Learning Enhancement for Adults with Disabilities); Literacy for Health; Steps to Success: Literacy Development in a Welfare-to-Work Program; Bronx Educational Services (BES) National Training Center for Literacy Teachers; Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Projects; Literacy Theater Staff Training for Practitioners; Outreach Training Center for Mandatory and Literacy Education; Practitioner Research as Staff Development; ABE [Adult Basic Education] Math Standards Project; Family English Literacy Plus Program (FEL+); Learn at Home, A Philadelphia Distance Learning Project; Online Action (OAR) Project; Assessment of Workplace Literacy; Basic Skills and Job Retention; Precision Strike Workplace Literacy; and Team Evaluation of Workplace Literacy Programs. (YLB)

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ED 382 809

National Institute for Literacy

National Literacy Grants Program

1992-1993

Final Report

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PREFACE

In 1992, our first year of funding, the National Institute for Literacy issued a request for proposals of projects that would advance the state of knowledge in the literacy field. The response to our invitation was overwhelming. We received nearly 600 applications requesting more than $43 million in funding. After a difficult process of narrowing the field, we funded 36 projects for a total of over $3 million.

The funded projects, originally described in a NIFL publication entitled *National Literacy Grants Program,* ran from the fall of 1992 until the end of 1993, and almost all of the final reports on grant activities were received by spring 1994. The profiles in this publication are based on reviews of those final reports. While the projects represent a rich array of literacy concerns and could be categorized in many different ways, we have chosen to group them under the topics that the grantees themselves, for the most part, thought best represented their primary focus.

As we anticipated, project results are mixed—not necessarily a bad outcome of an enterprise involving such a broad and diverse set of projects. Research, evaluation, and the development of new program models always entails trial and error and learning from both successes and failures. This is the way knowledge is accumulated and grows.

What is most important is that the results of these first NIFL projects become known and incorporated into the knowledge base of the field, that we pay attention to the lessons learned and improve practice as a result, and that we see how others have tried to address issues that we ourselves are facing, learn from what did or did not work, and decide on next steps in moving the state-of-the-knowledge ahead. The adult education and literacy field needs to learn more from its successes and failures, and these projects help us along that road.

This booklet presents straightforward summaries of the projects NIFL funded in 1992. We felt that it was important to highlight all the projects and let you, the real experts, decide what is valuable to you and your work—which projects asked the most interesting or important questions, had solid designs, were well implemented, and produced the most significant results.

Obviously, this publication does not present sufficient information to permit actual implementation of a similar program or otherwise glean all the knowledge that a project gained. Rather, it is designed as an introduction to 35 separate efforts that arouse the interest to many in the literacy field. You will see that we have included information that will allow you to follow up on any of the projects in order to get more information. We hope you will contact the projects that interest you or get their full reports from the ERIC system.

The National Institute for Literacy will be funding more research, evaluation, and development projects in the future. It is likely that any such funding opportunities will be more focused on key issues that you see as crucial to the improvement of teaching and learning in the field of adult and family literacy.

We want to thank all those who worked so hard on these first year NIFL grants, and we look forward to working with you as we continue the critically important process of finding out more about how to build a more literate America.We owe a great deal to Alden Lancaster and Gregg Jackson for their thoughtful review of all the projects, analysis of the process and results, and concise summaries of the individual efforts.

Adult Literacy in the U.S.: A Compendium of Quantitative Data and Interpretive Comments

Purpose:
To review the methods of testing literacy during the past 75 years, the various correlates of literacy skills, and the impact of adult literacy programs on literacy skill development.

Findings: The authors conclude with extensive illustrations that the armed forces' ability tests and several major literacy tests used during the past 75 years have had similar test items and produced similar score patterns. Intergenerational analyses repeatedly have found that parents' education, especially the mother's educational level, is correlated with their adult children's scores on these tests. A review of research on listening skills and reading skills indicates high correlations—those with low reading skills often have low listening abilities. There are substantial correlations between scores on the tests and occupational status, but within an occupation there is only a small correlation between test scores and job knowledge or job performance.

Most evaluations of adult literacy programs show that literacy test scores increase an average of only .5 to 1.5 "grade levels," and the gains are little affected by participants' entering skill levels or by the hours of instruction. The few evaluations examining learners who have remained in literacy programs for two or more years found that little improvement is made after the first year.

Based partly on this evidence and partly on recent developments in cognitive science, the authors conclude that reading skills are a function of one's knowledge base and information processing skills. They conclude that substantial gains in general reading skill are unlikely to be achieved quickly because success depends not only on decoding skills but also on knowledge about the subject matter being read. They suggest that in order to acquire high levels of reading skills, programs should encourage adults to engage in extensive outside reading, which hones decoding and meaning extraction skills while expanding the knowledge base.

Products: *Adult Literacy in the United States: A Compendium of Quantitative Data and Interpretive Comments,* Final Report (152 pp.); ERIC # 371 241. Also available from San Diego Community College District on a $25 cost recovery basis.

Contact: William B. Armstrong, Director, Institutional Research and Planning, San Diego Community College District, 3375 Camino del Rio S., San Diego, CA 92108; PH: 619/584–6941.
Internet address: izzy2qm@mvs.oac.ucla.edu

Cognitive Skills-Based Instruction and Assessment

Purpose:
To test the feasibility of imbedding cognitive skills instruction in ABE and ESL courses, and to test the impact of such instruction on performance as measured by the Test of Applied Literacy Skills (TALS).

Activities: Project staff identified the cognitive skills needed to score well on the TALS by reviewing the test and related research. The instructional interventions were designed to accommodate the length, content, and activities of the Los Angeles Unified School District's ESL and ABE courses. Twenty-two one-hour lessons were developed for the prose section of the TALS, and 12 one-hour lessons were developed for the document section. A detailed lesson plan and all materials needed for each lesson were prepared, including readings, transparencies, and worksheets. The lessons focused on how to read and process specific forms of text, such as short stories, schedules, lists, and tables, which were drawn from newspapers and magazines. Although the lessons were designed to be used with accompanying reading materials, most could be used with locally selected materials after minor modifications.

The lessons were tested in three large ESL classes (55 learners in each) and four medium sized ABE classes (15–30 learners). Similar ESL and ABE classes served as controls. The teachers were matched in respect to their experience. The test period was ten weeks.

Findings: The classes using the lessons showed greater gains on the TALS prose and document sections than the control group classes. In addition, the classes where the lessons had been most thoroughly implemented showed greater gains than those where there had only been partial implementation. The statistical significance of the differences was not tested.

The teachers and adult learners liked many of the lessons, but a few problems were encountered, including lessons that required more than the allotted hour, idiomatic language that caused difficulty for some ESL learners, and readings that were too difficult for some of the participants. Several teachers asked to use the lessons after the test period.

Products: *Cognitive Skills Based Instruction and Assessment Project Final Report, Parts I and II,* Final Report (100 pp), including an appendix with detailed lesson outlines; ERIC # ED 373 155.

Contact: Monte E. Perez, Director, or Ronald W. Solorzano, Consultant; Educational Testing Service; 40 N. Central Ave., Suite 700; Phoenix AZ 85004; PH: 602/252–5400; FAX: 602/252–7499. Internet address: meperez@rosedale.org

Hmong Adult Literacy Project

Purpose:
To teach adult Hmong immigrants literacy skills in their native language, using the Roman alphabet, and help them transfer those skills to the learning of English literacy.

Activities: A Freireian approach was used in this project. The teachers, all Hmong, relied considerably on the phonics approach, at the participants' urging, but they also used readings of life skills materials and historical-cultural matters. Community leaders came to talk with the class, correspondence was established with Hmong participants in a Wisconsin literacy program, and a substantial newsletter was prepared. English literacy classes were introduced in the ninth month but were terminated after the twelfth month because funding to continue them was not secured.

Findings: Over 180 adults participated during the first year, with about 50 attending at least once a week. In response to participants' requests, class hours were extended and the newsletter production was scheduled for three nights a week after the regular classes. Several participants brought their children to the classes so that they too could become literate in Hmong. The learners' main motivations for participating were to preserve knowledge of their history and culture, and to communicate with relatives and friends in Laos or elsewhere. Ethnographic research in the classes found extensive collaboration among participants, learning done primarily through copying examples, the use of imagery to aid memorization, verbalization during almost all reading and writing, a concern with exactness, and self-effacing behavior accompanied by a fear of losing face when making mistakes. Interviews with all Hmong students in the local elementary school found that those from families with an adult in the program indicated substantial increases in literacy activities at home, whereas those from the other families indicated no increases.

Products: *Hmong Adult Literacy Project. Final Report* (120 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 836.
ED 376749

Contact: Adrienne Herrell, California State University, 2771 East Shaw, Fresno CA 93726; PH: 209/278–0266; FAX: 209/278–0404.

Hmong/English Bilingual Adult Literacy

Purpose: To teach Hmong immigrants literacy in their native language, using the Roman alphabet, and in English.

Activities: Program activities followed three principles: 1) a community network should guide and support the program; 2) the instructors should establish and maintain good relationships with the participants; and 3) the learning experiences should be responsive to the participants' desires with respect to both content and methods. Native language literacy was taught two days a week, English literacy was taught two days a week, separate bilingual problem-posing sessions (mostly focusing on life-coping and job-finding situations) were held daily, and a family literacy component was introduced in the eighth month.

Findings: The project had difficulty recruiting participants, but 25 eventually attended, and most remained in the program for about six months, until the summer, when many worked harvesting fields. Though the project intended to use a Freireian approach, the participants asked for, and sometimes insisted upon, phonics instruction, sight word practice, textbooks, workbooks, individual audio tapes to listen to at home, homework, tests, notebooks, and pens. The project plan was to begin by teaching native literacy and oral English, but the participants requested that English literacy be taught right from the beginning. The participants also asked to correspond with learners in a California Hmong literacy project, and to prepare a "Newcomers Booklet" for Hmong arriving in Green Bay.

Participants showed modest gains on a test of Hmong literacy and modest gains on a test of English skills (the BEST). The instructors and family tutors noticed a marked improvement in English communication skills. Both the teachers and a native Hmong consultant noted that participants went from the traditional fear of making mistakes to apparent comfort in their laborious efforts to communicate in English. Occasionally they would even good-naturedly tease the teacher.

Products: *Hmong/English Bilingual Adult Literacy Project. Final Report* (100 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 837. ED 376 750

Contact: Mike Marinetti, University of Wisconsin—Green Bay, 2420 Nicolet Drive, Green Bay WI 54311–7001; PH: 414/465–2454; FAX: 414/465–2718.

Project ESL Consortium

Purpose:
To create an effective, coordinated program for adult ESL students by forming a new consortium of three education agencies.

Activities: In Greenville County's consortium, each education agency now handles different steps and roles in the new coordinated programming for adults needing English as a Second Language (ESL), as follows: 1) Greenville Literacy Association : all intake and placement testing, language lab orientation and oversight, beginning survival English in small group classes (for BEST Test levels 1 to 4), tutor training; 2) Greenville School District Adult Education: larger groups or individualized instruction in intermediate level conversation, U.S. culture/citizenship and grammar (for levels 5 to 6); and 3) Greenville Technical College: advanced classes in conversation and grammar.

More than 400 new ESL students (mostly Hispanic and Vietnamese) had intake interviews and pre-testing, and were referred to an appropriate class. Student information was entered into a continually-updated common computer database and paper filing system. Forms were consistent across the agencies, and included a student information form, attendance forms, interest inventories, self-evaluation forms, and teaching logs. After each 50 hours of instruction (which was easy to track from the computer), students were given a self-evaluation and teacher evaluation of progress and the BEST post-test to determine advancement to the next site for higher level classes.

All students had access to a newly-expanded Resource Library and Language Lab, which included computers, videos, books and audiocassettes (some for borrowing). Time in the lab, and materials used, were also tracked for assessment of students' progress and preferred materials. Eleven new beginning ESL classes were also added since the Consortium formed.

Thirty new ESL tutors were trained through a new training process. All attended an orientation workshop, were given an individualized learning plan based on their needs (videos or books, one-to-one training meetings), then visited a class, and finally were assigned a small group of students. Information on tutors was also entered into the shared computer system.

Findings: The ESL Consortium Project exceeded its own expectations. Services became centralized, thus decreasing duplication, simplifying the process for students, and decreasing waste of time and money. Prior to the Consortium, most students were enrolled with all three providers; now there is no duplication. Students' BEST post-tests showed an average increase of three grade levels. The student waiting list decreased by half. Students favorably evaluated the initial intake process. The Lab became "a hub for ESL students in Greenville County." In 10 months the use of the Lab increased from 126 to 747 students. As the need for even more consistent forms and coordination among the agencies became apparent, forms were further revised and representatives of the three agencies began to meet monthly to coordinate and refine the Consortium's development.

Products: *Project ESL Consortium: Final Report* (39 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 838.
ED 376751

Contact: Beth Nachman, Senior Program Manager, ESL; Greenville Literacy Association; 301 University Ridge, Suite 5400; Greenville, SC 29601; PH: 803/467–3560; FAX: 803/467–3560.

Quincy School Community Council Take and Give Program

Purpose:
To expand the capacity of a classroom-based ESL program for adult Asian immigrants by using program graduates as peer tutors and videotaped instruction for review at home.

Activities: The Quincy School Community Council's classroom ESL program had accumulated a waiting list of over 1,000 applicants, mostly for the entry level classes. Graduates of the program's most advanced classes were trained to be tutors in workshops of 6 hours a week for eight weeks, focusing on instructional techniques, motivational strategies, and further development of the participants' own English skills. Following the training, the tutors were matched with two groups of two learners each. Tutors met with each group twice a month to review video lessons and worksheets and to provide additional instruction. The objective was to enhance the learners' English to the point where they would be prepared to enter the second level classes. It was also hoped that the tutors would further improve their own English skills and career opportunities.

Accomplishments: By the end of the tutor training experience some participants would have liked more training, but all felt prepared for their tutoring assignments. Only 3 of 37 tutors failed to continue tutoring for the agreed upon one-year period. Almost all the tutors reported that all the learners came to every bi-weekly session for the full six-months period and did their homework. All but a few of the learners reported, in interviews, that the tutors had been quite helpful. Three-fourths rated the videotapes (the "Practical English" series) as just right in difficulty, but more than half confirmed the need for the printed student activity worksheets that project staff had developed to supplement the videos. All but one reported learning more English from the program, almost all found it easier to use English, and many felt more confident of their ability to use the language. Within one year, 54 percent had moved into the second level classes, and a few qualified others were waiting for new classes to start. Judging by test results, teachers' reports, and observations in the second level classes, those learners who had received the tutoring were about as well prepared as those who had completed the entry level classes.

Products: *Evaluation of the Quincy School Community Council's Take and Give Program. Final Report* (92 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 837.

ED 376 750

Contact: Roger Hooper, AESL Program Director, Quincy School Community Council, 885 Washington St., Boston, MA 02111; PH: 617/635–5133; FAX: 617/635–5129.

Effective Community Based Family Literacy

Purpose:
To identify the structures, strategies, and approaches of community based family literacy programs that are most effective in serving hard-to-reach participants.

Activities: The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE) used its own databases and other organizations' suggestions to identify 23 promising community based family literacy programs. Telephone interviews with representatives of each program were used to collect additional information. Fourteen programs were selected for site visits on the basis of impressions about their effectiveness in serving disadvantaged persons, their longevity (at least two years of operation), and the extent to which they had a program philosophy and approach responsive to community needs. Two-day site visits were made to study each program. During the visits, interviews were conducted with program directors, staff, and learners. Reviews were made of the curricula, learners' files, and administrative records; and classrooms were observed.

Findings: All the studied programs provided non-threatening environments, flexibility for accommodating different skill levels and personal goals, support services, and linkages to other service providers. Instruction focused on the interests of the learners, was participatory, emphasized life skills and/or parenting education, and involved cooperative learning to build a sense of community within the classroom. Both traditional and non-traditional learning strategies were used. Learners most often mentioned they had experienced improvements in basic skills, self-esteem, problem solving, involvement in community affairs, parenting skills, family relationships, and their children's willingness to learn. Suggestions most commonly made by the program staff and ACBE researchers for improving the programs include: increase program funding, hire more staff, expand learner participation in guiding the program, arrange for good child care, strengthen components for enhancing the children's personal and educational development, and improve the assessment and documentation of learners' progress.

Products: *Effective Practices in Community Based Family Literacy: Results of a National Research and Evaluation Project,* Final Report (100 pp.) including descriptions of each program; ERIC # ED 372 295.

Contact: Patricia Jackson, Literacy Project Coordinator, Association for Community Based Education, 1805 Florida Avenue N.W., Washington DC 20009; PH: 202/462–6333; FAX: 202/232–8044.

Family Literacy Demonstration Project

Purpose:
To demonstrate a collaborative family literacy program using new curriculum approaches and the "inquiry-based" evaluation method.

Activities: The project, a collaborative effort of The Center for Literacy (CFL) and the Philadelphia Public Schools, took place in three inner-city elementary schools which were selected through a competitive process. The 52 adult participants recruited through the schools were all African-American women who were parents, grandparents or guardians of children primarily in grades K–1. Most participants were on public assistance.

The project focused primarily on the adults' education. For 6 to 7 months adults attended literacy classes. A four-week summer learning camp had adults and children learning together. Instruction was offered for 10 hours a week, using a learner-centered, whole language approach. The instructional content mirrored the K–1 curriculum for children (i.e., if children were learning classification using shapes and colors, adults worked on classification of kinds of literature; if children were learning characteristics of shapes, adults would explore these through geometry). This "mirroring" model was based on the Based on recommendations of parents in earlier CFL focus groups

Parents developed their own Individual Education Plan. Gains were assessed by pre- and post-instructional Planning Conferences, a procedure developed collaboratively by the University of Pennsylvania's Literacy Research Center and CFL. This procedure evaluates uses of reading and writing; reading, writing and math strategies; reading comprehension; and achievement of goals.

Project evaluation addressed outcomes demonstrated by this assessment procedure, but primarily focused on processes, challenges and issues. The project endeavored to use the inquiry-based approach. Data collected included: classroom activity logs; students' dialogue journals; teachers' journals; personal interviews; field notes of teaching sessions, classroom observation, and focus groups; and transcripts of biweekly evaluation meetings. Since project staff spent most of their time implementing the program, the project evaluator supported individual inquiry projects through interviews, field notes, and data analysis.

Findings: Parents attending at least 100 hours gained at least one grade in 4 of the 5 assessment areas and achieved an average of 3 goals (such as: "learned to use computer," or "got a job"). Parents reported that they now read more, see themselves as role models for their children, are more motivated to act as a parent-teacher, and have new literacy skills and parenting ideas. Parents were unanimous in their positive evaluation of the program.

Products: *Family Literacy Demonstration Project.* Final Program Report (25 pp) and Final Evaluation Report (45 pp.), ERIC # ED 372 290. *Parents, Children and Learning: A Family Literacy Curriculum to Support Parents of Children in Kindergarten and First Grade* (170 pp.): Part One: Background Materials, ERIC # ED 372 292; Part Two: Adult Activities; ERIC # ED 372 293; Part Three: Summer Learning Camp; ERIC # ED 372 294.

Contact: JoAnn Weinberger, Executive Director; Center for Literacy, Inc.; 636 S. 48th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19143; PH: 215/474–1235; FAX: 215/472–7290.

Intergenerational Family Literacy: A Head Start /Older Adult Partnership

Purpose:
To demonstrate the use of older adult volunteers to improve Head Start parents' skills in developing their own children's literacy.

Activities: The project was a collaborative effort between the University of Pittsburgh's Generations Together, three Head Start systems, and two literacy organizations. Nine older adults (aged 55+) were recruited as "family literacy mentors" and trained in home-visiting and family literacy theories and methods. Each mentor was matched with two or three families recruited from Head Start programs. The mentors visited their families at least one hour per week, facilitating family literacy activities with family members of all ages. The sessions usually involved: 1) picking a theme with the family, 2) reading a story around that theme, and 3) facilitating a theme-related activity with the family focusing on listening and questioning. Activities ranged from making a bookcase or a greeting card to planting seeds to taking field trips.

Findings: Excerpts from interviews with parents revealed a range of positive results—parents realizing that they are "teachers" at home, parents learning interactive family literacy activities, children wanting to read more. The Head Start parents initially volunteered because they wanted help for their children, but gradually they began to ask for help for themselves. They wanted help facilitating their child's transition to kindergarten and advocating with the school. The mentors found that flexibility in homes was key. Mutually rewarding mentor-family relationships resulted. Continuing visits through the summer, even while Head Start was not in session, contributed to the project's success.

The best approach to mentor training was found to be an initial 12-hour hands-on session, followed by orientation visits and modeling of activities by staff in the home. Individual support and debriefing with mentors after visits, and monthly in-service hands-on workshops, were most useful. Mentor training had to be flexible and ongoing, offered for one or many new volunteers at a time.

It was noted that collaboration with diverse partners can be an administrative hurdle. Interagency collaboration needs a clear leader within each agency. Not all Head Start systems were amenable to the project; one was able to take a pivotal leadership role, and one dropped out. Recruitment of older volunteers required an ongoing widespread campaign.

Products: *Intergenerational Family Literacy: A Head Start / Older Adult Partnership: Final Report* (14 pp.); ERIC # 372289.
Home Based Family Literacy Mentoring: A Guide for Head Start Teachers, (20 pp); ERIC # 372 290.

Contact: Thomas Smith, Generations Together; University of Pittsburgh; 121 University Place, 3rd Floor; Pittsburgh, PA 15260; PH: 412/624–7371; FAX: 412/624–4810;
Internet address: tbsst3@icarus.lis.pitt.edu.

Learning with East Aurora Families (LEAF) Project

Purpose:
To develop new components for Waubonsee Community College's family literacy program for at-risk families, and to document program successes.

Activities: A modified Keenan model family literacy program was developed for 50 at-risk urban families with 4 and 5 year-olds. Staff met regularly to ensure seamless integration of the several program components. Families attended eight evenings each month. On five of those evenings, parents attended individualized ABE/GED or ESL classes, while their children attended a preschool class. Two evenings were Parents And Child Together (PACT) sessions. One evening was a parenting workshop (on domestic violence, disciplining children, drugs and gangs, and fire prevention). The families also participated in four family literacy home visits, five weeks of summer PACT evenings, field trips, and a lending library. Attendance barriers were overcome with free bus services and free child care for children under age 4 and 6–12. The project also produced a videotape, curriculum book and evaluation report.

Findings: In contrast to past problems with getting family participation, LEAF recruitment was not difficult; in fact, the program was over-enrolled. Participation was likely increased by the child care, transportation and family support system provided, and 31 of the 50 families returned for a second year.

From pre-post tests of 48% of parents, the reported literacy gains were 1.0 grade level per 71.5 hours of instruction in ABE/GED (using the TABE), and 1.1 level per 73 hours in ESL (using the EELS). From pre-post tests of 86% of preschoolers, the reported gain was 1.22 grade levels per 65 hours of instruction (using the Geese and other tests). An average of 62% attended regularly. Lack of attendance was mostly caused by children's illnesses. The retention rate was 75%. Staff reported changes in parents, including parents seeing themselves as their children's teachers and being involved in their children's schools. Parents reported that their children were doing better in school, even the older ones who had not attended LEAF.

Products: *Learning with East Aurora Families (LEAF). A NIFL Demonstration Project Family Literacy Curriculum* (136 pp); ERIC # ED 373 186.
Learning with East Aurora Families. Project Evaluation, ERIC # 373 187
Learning with East Aurora Families (LEAF) videotape (23 min.).

Contact: Connie Dickson; Coordinator, Waubonsee Adult Literacy; Waubonsee Community College; 5 East Galena Blvd.; Aurora, IL 60506; PH: 708/892–3334, ext. 107; 708/892–3374.

Literacy is for Everyone (LIFE)

Purpose:
To demonstrate an intergenerational and intercultural literacy program targeting families with at-risk middle and high school youth, with the objectives of raising literacy skills, empowering parents to be more active in their children's schooling and other activities, and improving the youths' school performance.

Activities: The instructors collaboratively planned the program, basing it on Freire's transformative philosophy. Twice a week ESL or ABE instruction was provided for parents, tutoring was provided for their middle and high school youth, and computer laboratories were available for both. Intercultural and transgenerational group activities were arranged. The instruction was learner-centered and emerged from learner discussions. Child care was also provided.

Findings: Despite a slow start in recruitment, 206 people registered during the 12-month period. Attendance and retention were problems, but 40% missed no more than three sessions from the point at which they enrolled. The computer laboratories were very popular. Parents used them to practice writing, and the youth used them for homework assignments; both also used them to prepare journals and produce a newsletter.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that the program had noticeable effects on at least some of the parents and youth. In one group of eleven parents working on developing English skills, seven found jobs, found new jobs, or were promoted during the period of study. Some of the regular classroom teachers of the youth observed improvements in their academic skills and conduct. The counselors unanimously agreed that the youth in the program had made significant progress. The school board appropriated funds to continue the program after the grant period.

Products: *Stories from LIFE at Falls Church High School. Final Report. Literacy is for Everyone (LIFE)* (120 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 841.

ED 376754

Contact: Jane Cruz, Office of Adult and Community Education, Fairfax County Public Schools, 7510 Lisle Avenue, Falls Church, VA 22043; PH: 703/698–0400; FAX: 703/698–7997.

Native American Parents as Teachers of their Children

Purpose:
To develop an instructional guide and video to help Native American parents be better teachers and advocates for their children.

Activities: A team of six diverse educators with a good mix of experience formed to create the guide and videotape. The team chose to build on existing family literacy programs and to develop four workshops for parents. They decided on the "parent outcomes" for the workshops, identified "points to be made" related to each outcome, then determined appropriate learning activities and needed materials. Team members struggled with many questions in the process, such as how materials required for the learning activities could be kept inexpensive so that workshops would be more accessible. They made sure that the activities and materials were appropriate for Native American cultures. The resulting first draft was also reviewed for appropriateness with parents of children aged 3 to 5 and some aged 5 to 7.

The workshops focus on: 1) The role parents play as teachers of their children and how they can positively affect their children's emergent literacy; 2) storytelling, book handling skills, gross and fine motor skills, basic sounds of letters, and beginning math skills. 3) helping children learn how to read; and 4) parent advocacy for children when they enter school. The instructional binder contains tips for facilitation of collaborative learning, differences between Native American and Euro-American learning, sections on each workshop, a packet of handouts and a videotape with certain segments keyed to certain workshop activities.

Fort Peck Community College hosted a field test of the four two-hour workshops (facilitated by the two Native American team members). The college recruited 10 participants, arranged child care, offered one college credit for participants, and videotaped the field tests. Revisions were then made, more material was added, and the final product was produced.

Findings: The field test indicated that parents had both interest in and need for these workshops. The hands-on activities were particularly effective. The video of the field test did not yield the needed instructional footage, but was very useful for team members to use in evaluating the workshops. Recommended revisions included incorporating Native American pictographs and giving workshop participants a choice of advocacy content. The team found Native American Family Empowerment Cultural Sensitivity Training a very helpful resource. The rapport and trust of the team were key to the project's success.

Products: *Native American Parents as Teachers of Their Children: A Four-Part Workshop*, (instructional guide) (64 pp.), instructional video (43 min.), workshop handouts (23 pp.), Final Report (11 pp.); ERIC # 372 296.

Contact: Dr. Gloria A. Gregg, Director; Center for Community-School Development and Testing Services; Montana State University; 244 Reid Hall; Bozeman, MT 59717; PH: 406/994–6984; FAX: 406/994–1854.

Open Doors Program

Purpose:
To create a family literacy program with child and parent support services for homeless single mothers, and assess participants' educational gains.

Activities: The Open Doors Program generated 40 community volunteers, seven staff, and a tremendous amount of community support. It served 42 single mothers and their children. The mothers were currently or recently homeless, 69% African-American, and averaged age 21. They had no more than an eighth grade literacy level, and were below the federal poverty line.

There were three program components five days a week: Adult Literacy / GED Services, Development Enrichment/Childcare for children up to three years old, and Support Services (housing assistance, daily door-to-door van transportation, counseling, referrals, life skills and parenting classes, field trips and a motivational retreat). The program provided a "peer support club," in which the program's mothers met with mothers who had already passed their GEDs and moved on to more successes. Open Doors also matched each participant with a "role model/mentor," generally a volunteer from Church Women United or Executive Women International.

Literacy and GED preparation was taught through individualized work in a learning center, assisted by a teacher and volunteer tutors. The program also included periodic group work, peer tutoring, weekly math classes, and use of a donated computer. Upon entering the program, participants completed the GED pre-test, Self-diagnostic Inventories of strengths, needs, interests and learning styles, and a Goals and Action Steps form. They were given individual education plans, with tailored tutoring and assigned materials. Students met monthly with staff to assess progress.

Findings: The mothers expressed great appreciation for the Open Doors Program. They especially appreciated being in the peer support club. The most common barriers to participation had been lack of child care and transportation, and the provision of these services was critical to the program's success.

Of the 42 mothers, 12 passed the GED test and 11 were within five points of passing by the end of the project. Although comparison of educational gains with a random assignment control group had been planned, the plan was not implemented because of the desperate need for services by all the mothers. Pre/post-testing was also found to be difficult to implement. The families seemed to fear tests, they avoided test appointments, and there were too few staff and too many daily program needs to reschedule testing individually. Using the Denver Developmental Screening Test as pre-test, six of the 43 children in the enrichment program were found to have eight developmental delays between them. At project's end, there were no developmental delays found.

Products: *Open Doors. An Innovative Family Literacy Program. Final Report* (61 pp.); ERIC # 373 154.

Contact: Marilyn V. Mabry, Program Director; Harris Family Foundation; P.O. Box 11122; Huntsville, AL 35814–1122; PH: 205/837–2856; FAX: 205/837–6611.

Parents and Preschoolers Intergenerational Literacy Project

Purpose:
To demonstrate a program in which college students and low-income parents learned to develop preschoolers' literacy.

Activities: Three workshop sessions were held with 50 Even Start and 26 Head Start parent volunteers on how to develop emergent reading and writing. The workshops included participatory presentations on parent-preschooler literacy interactions, interactive reading to children, early writing development, types of books, and environmental print. Parents saw interactive reading modeled, practiced in role plays, and practiced with their children, and were provided with materials to continue interactive reading and writing at home. Even Start parents attended workshops during their weekly Even Start parent sessions. Head Start parents participated during family dinners provided by churches. A college course also taught 53 college student tutors to read and write with preschoolers. Parent-child and tutor-child interactive reading occurred weekly at four project sites: the Head Start and Even Start sites, a shelter for homeless families, and a battered spouse shelter.

"Lending libraries" of backpacks were assembled for the low-income parents' use at home. There were 35 backpacks, each containing a storybook, a toy relating to the story's theme, and a blank book for writing and drawing. Packets with books on tape and tape recorders were also created to support parents with lowest literacy levels. The program was evaluated by analyzing the following: interviews with staff and parents, videotapes of parents reading to their children, and the college students' journals. The workshops were made into a handbook and disseminated at state and national conferences.

Findings: Parent and student tutors learned skills in interactive reading. Parents made more use of the storybook cover for questioning, related stories more to their personal lives, and paid more attention to emergent writing. The preschoolers changed, too; they wanted to pick out books, read the stories, interact with stories, and be read to more. Frequency of reading at home and number of books read increased. The backpacks were a big hit with parents and children.

Parent participation in workshops was sporadic. Head Start parents were the most difficult to recruit, but their participation increased with offers of free dinners at churches, free pizza coupons, and free book give-aways.

Products: *Parents and Preschoolers: An Intergenerational Literacy Project.* Evaluation Report, (39 pp.), ERIC # ED 373 153.
Parents and Children Sharing Literacy, Handbook (61 pp.).

Contact: Dr. Barbara J. Walker, Chair, Department of Special Education and Reading; Montana State University – Billings; 1500 North 30th Street; Billings, Montana 59101; PH: 406/657–2091; FAX: 406/657–2807.

Project PALS (Parenting and Literacy Skills)

Purpose:
To establish a family literacy program in a rural community through a partnership of agencies, and to increase parents' and children's skills.

Activities: Project PALS was started as a collaboration between the Bryan Independent School District, the local Head Start systems and local Literacy Volunteers of America. Forty-three Head Start families were referred through Head Start staff and attended as two groups at two Head Start sites. Project PALS had several components: Adult Literacy / GED / ESL classes; individual tutoring by LVA; Head Start classes for children; weekly Parent and Child Together (PACT) time; field trips; and bilingual parenting classes using the Practical Parent Education curriculum and special topics prepared by staff. Support services included door-to-door van transportation, payment of GED test fees, and home visits to provide individual attention or to check on absent families.

Findings: Eight Hispanic parents attended ESL classes and 35 parents attended ABE /GED classes. Of the 35, 20 either passed the GED, passed part of it, or are awaiting their test date. No data were available for ESL outcomes. By the end of the project, parents showed enjoyment interacting with their preschoolers and had learned to use two-way communication rather than chastising and yelling. They reported that now they spend time reading to their children (even those not in the program) whereas before PALS they did not. This was due to opportunities to practice, their increased skills in reading, and availability of books to take home. Parents requested more books be sent home every week. For the majority of the families, these books were the only books in the home.

The children were pre- and post-tested with the Preschool Inventory and improved from an average pretest score of 11.7% to an average post-test of 53.2%. Their teachers reported reduced aggressive behavior, improved social skills with those of other ethnic backgrounds, and improved hygiene.

The two program groups differed. One jelled as a group right away, while the other had interracial frictions. Parent recruitment was difficult due to the inaccessibility of the first location. Parents preferred that PALS classes be held the same night as the weekly evening parent session at Head Start ("one stop shopping").

Only 6 of 43 parents were tutored by LVA, due to missed appointments and test anxiety. While agency collaboration was a goal, it was reported that some partners did not fulfill their obligations as well as they might have.

Products: *Project PALS (Parenting and Literacy Skills)*, Final Report, ERIC # ED 373 151.

Contact: Dr. Marcia Murray, Bilingual/ESOL Supervisor, Bryan Independent School District; 1307 Memorial Drive, Suite 215; Bryan, TX 77802; PH: 409/361–9680; FAX: 409/774–0433.

Reading Rainbow: Creating Families of Readers

Purpose:
To research and pilot prototype outreach products based on the TV series, to promote family literacy in homes across Western New York.

Activities: This project of WNED–TV began with the identification of family literacy efforts already underway in the Western New York area to assess needs and promising practices and to galvanize community support. A broad-based region-wide collaborative task force was formed to identify key research questions and family literacy audiences, and to help organize a focus group research plan. Focus groups were conducted by WNED–TV with parents, teachers, literacy providers, parent organizations, and principals. Individual interviews were also conducted with children in grades 2 to 8. The task force, along with RMC Research Corporation, analyzed findings and helped launch the outreach campaign.

The project created a 30-minute Reading Rainbow Family TV Special and promoted a Reading Rainbow Family Reading Week. The program aired twice in February 1994. It featured local families engaged in literacy activities in the studio, Reading Rainbow clips, interviews about family literacy, and song and dance numbers. A feature radio report highlighting national and local trends in family literacy was also broadcast on WEBR News Radio 970 for 2,000 morning commuters during the Family Reading Week.

The project produced a colorful Family Calendar showing illustrations of families reading, and listing fun literacy activities to support year-round literacy-based activity in the home. "Bedtime reading pajama parties" were promoted in which groups of families watched the TV Special together, participated in interactive storytelling, completed a family literacy activity designed for easy replication later at home, and received a free calendar.

The Family Reading Week, pajama party concept, and TV Special were widely publicized through flyers, print ads and news articles. The project distributed a "Start-Up Kit" and held "Awareness Meetings" to help interested pajama party coordinators organize parties that week, or, through WNED–TV's one-year off-air recording rights, at other times in the year.

Findings: The summary of the focus groups indicated that literacy providers and parent organizations recognize the potential of Reading Rainbow "to promote 'good television' and connect families to reading." It is estimated that 80,000 households and up to 108,000 student in schools watched the TV Special. About 350 sites requested information about the project, and more than 75 "pajama parties", involving 12,000 families, were organized by schools, libraries, agencies, churches and homes region-wide. A follow-up survey from party participants was to be compiled for feedback on the project.

Products: *Reading Rainbow: Creating Families of Readers* (80 pp.), Final Report with attachments: focus group results, calendar, start-up kit, publicity and program materials; ERIC # 373 151.

Contact: Dr. Tony Buttino, Vice President for National and Local Production ,or Pamela Johnson; Director of Education and Outreach; Western New York Public Broadcasting, Horizons Plaza; P.O. Box 1263; Buffalo, NY 14240; PH: 716/845–7000; FAX: 716/845–7036.

Relationships Between Parental Literacy Skills and Children's Ability to Learn Literacy Skills

Purpose: Most prior studies of parental literacy usage in homes have been based on self-reports. This research project sought to observe actual parental literacy usage in the homes, and to examine the relationships between that usage and the emergent literacy skills of the families' young children.

Activities: Research assistants spent an average of 35 hours per family observing literacy activity in 20 English-speaking, low-SES homes. They also administered several assessments of emergent literacy understanding and skills to young children, ages 4–6, in the homes. The observers' notes were then coded and analyzed with simple statistics.

Findings: The study found that the families averaged 1.16 literacy-related events per hour, but only .76 events per hour involved actual reading or writing. The most common literacy events were for entertainment, daily living, the learning or teaching of literacy, school-related matters, and storybook time. The greatest proportion of text used in the homes was at the clausal/phrasal level, e.g., food coupons, container print. The next most used level was at the full written discourse level of complexity—beyond the single sentence) found in books, magazines and documents.

The children, as a group, displayed a below-average knowledge of written language concepts. The results revealed that children whose parents read and write on their own at more complex levels of text and who read and write with the children begin formal literacy instruction knowing more about critical written language concepts than those whose parents do not. Parents with lower levels of literacy engage less in those activities and thus are unable to help their children acquire concepts at home that are needed to make sense of instruction at school. Results also showed that schooling makes a big difference regarding the acquisition of this knowledge. Further, adult education programs focusing on family literacy positively influence the frequency of both literacy events and mother/child interactions.

Products: *Relationships Between Parental Literacy Skills and Functional Uses of Print and Children' Ability to Learn Literacy Skills*, Final Report (100 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 288. "Literacy at the Hart's and the Larson's: Diversity Among Poor, Inner-City Families," *Reading Teacher*, April 1995.

Contact: Victoria Purcell-Gates, Associate Professor, Human Development and Psychology, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, 204 Larsen Hall, Cambridge MA 02138; PH: 617/495–3521; FAX: 617/495–3626; Internet address: purcelvi@hugsel.harvard.edu.

"A Feel for Books" Program Effectiveness Study

Purpose:
To analyze change in adult learners and teachers resulting from their participation in a book discussion group program.

Activities: A series of book discussions were held in libraries. They were facilitated on a volunteer basis by local ABE staff and were attended by 40–50 ABE students from several local programs. Six teachers and 10 students from four literacy programs volunteered for the program evaluation. An external evaluator conducted an ethnographic evaluation using pre- and post-interviews about participants' perceived changes as literacy learners and teachers. Students also kept logs about their experiences with literacy, and teachers kept logs to observe students' progress. The evaluator used a modified constant comparative method to analyze the content of interviews with the 16 mostly African-American participants. She categorized data using three frameworks: 1) Ways of understanding reading: the phonics model, the whole word model, and the meaning model (Keefe & Meyer, 1980), 2) Dimensions of literacy learning: perceptions, practices, strategies and interests, and goals (Lytle & Shultz, 1989), and 3) Attributes and skills of adult educators: instructional skills, transaction skills, role, personality, knowledge (Galbraith, 1989). A Resource Manual was developed to help programs wishing to start their own book discussion program.

Findings: Both students and teachers reported positive changes. The students reported increases in self-improvement, satisfaction with literacy performances, self-esteem, personal functioning, and clarity and accessibility of goals. There was no change in students' understanding of effective instruction, but teachers' greatest reported change was in improved instructional skills, especially skills in questioning. Six of the 10 students (and all six teachers) developed or retained the meaning model of reading; the phonics model was the second most popular, and the whole word model was the least. Most participants ranked the program as "excellent" They described the book discussions between students and teachers as peers as democratic—"a great leveler." Students especially liked the opportunity to express themselves; they said they now talk more easily and often, and that they learned more about themselves and the world.

All participants had difficulty completing logs. Teachers generally did not have time but valued the encouragement to observe student progress. Students ranged from loving to hating this process, and their log-writing frequency did not correlate with any other reported changes.

Products: *"A Feel For Books" Program Effectiveness Study,* Final Report (34 pp.), ERIC # ED 372 303. *A Feel For Books: A Resource Manual* (91 pages); available from the D.C. Public Library.

Contact: Marcia Harrington, ABE Specialist; D.C. Public Library; 901 G St. NW, Rm. 300; Washington, DC 20001; (202) 727–1616.

Demonstration and Documentation of Strategies, Methodologies, and Tools for Literacy Programs Serving Native Americans

Purpose:
To evaluate and develop new resources for reaching and teaching Cherokee adults with limited literacy skills.

Activities: Two teachers provided literacy instruction in eight classes to 110 adults in six primarily rural Oklahoma Cherokee communities. Three new resources were created, field tested and evaluated. The first two were evaluated by and disseminated to other tribes at the 1993 National Indian Adult Education Association (NIAEA) Annual Conference. Using inspection and interviews, an external evaluator assessed the three new books, and the program's adequacies and needs during the 1992–93 grant year by comparison to the prior year.

Findings: The newly-created "Master Skills Checklist" was found to be an accurate objective indicator of student gains in discrete sequenced literacy skills, and an improved assessment system over the unpopular TABE long-form test (yet not correlated to grade levels). "The Write Way—Book I" and "Community Organizing" were generally rated excellent by staff from diverse Native American cultures attending NIAEA's annual meeting. Both books were considered culturally sensitive. The first teaches the grammatically correct sentence, and had mixed ratings as a motivating resource. The latter presents a participant-centered philosophy. It was rated as especially useful for setting up new, well-attended adult education programs.

Major findings from the external evaluation report were the following: 1) unstable program funding created grant limitations; 2) program resources (teachers, facilities, materials) were adequate and there were indications of program improvements since the prior year; 3) obstacles to participation include need for transportation, child care, eyeglasses, and hearing aids; 4) staff training is needed for using the skills checklist system, and both new teaching materials need refinement; and; 5) staff had already been naturally using the newly-introduced "community organizing" approach.

Products: *Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma Indian Adult Education Program. Final External Evaluation* (28 pp.) ERIC # ED 373 193–194. *The Write Way—Book I. The Simple Sentence: Writing and Grammar Instruction for Indian Adults* (136 pp.), ERIC # ED 373 190. Community Organizing: Strategies for Recruitment and Retention (35 pp.), ERIC # ED 373 191. *Master Skills Checklist and Diagnostics* (28 pp.), ERIC # ED 373 192.

Contact: Victor Vance, Manager, Indian Adult Education; Cherokee Nation; P.O. Box 948; Tahlequah, OK 74465; PH and FAX: 918/ 458–0484.

LEAD 2000 (Learning Enhancement for Adults With Disabilities)

Purpose:
To devise an action plan for addressing the needs of learning disabled adults participating in literacy programs, and to conduct basic research in preparation for developing a computerized battery of tests to assess learning disabilities in adults.

Activities: A national congress of experts in adult literacy and services for the learning disabled was convened to consider an action plan. The literature on learning disabilities and their assessment was reviewed by project staff.

Findings: The congress issued a resolution calling on the U.S. Department of Education to establish a national policy for meeting the lifelong educational needs of learning disabled adults, provide reasonable funding for that purpose, coordinate the various federal programs that affect learning disabled adults, and fund research on effective programs. The congress also urged an action agenda for developing assessments of learning disabilities and promoting their widespread use, establishing a clearinghouse of information related to learning disabilities, and creating a national learning center to train and provide technical support to persons working with learning disabled adults.

In the literature review, the types of learning disabilities found to be most commonly discussed in existing literature were dyslexia, dysgraphia (disability in production of written language), dyscalculia (disability in mathematics), and dysorthographia (disability in spelling). No literature was found on the prevalence of various types of learning disabilities. The project staff briefly reviewed existing instruments appropriate for standardized screening, differential diagnosis, and prescriptive assessment of adults with learning disabilities. Those thought most appropriate for each purpose are listed in appendices to the final report. The staff concluded that computerized assessment of learning disabilities may have promise, but that valid interpretation will require complex clinical judgments based on observation of clients' behavioral and affective characteristics.

Products: *LEAD 2000: Learning Enhancement for Adults with Disabilities. Final Performance and Financial Report,* including the proceedings of the congress; ERIC # ED 373 158.

Contact: Julia Ernst; University of the Ozarks; 415 College Avenue; Clarksville, AR 72830; PH: 501/754–3839.

Literacy for Health

Purpose:
To develop a curriculum that fosters health literacy skills, encourages and assists participants to improve their health practices, and enhances values and attitudes that support healthy behavior.

Activities: A public health nurse, a community health advocate, an adult literacy specialist, a primary health care coordinator, and an evaluator collaborated in an effort to combine literacy training and health education. The focus was on reading health-related materials for meaning, critical thinking, and problem solving. The curriculum involved 25 different two-hour modules that were taught by the nurse and health advocate to low-income African-American participants in existing adult literacy and parenting programs. The curriculum was refined after each successive implementation and also was adjusted for the skills and interests of the learners in each instructional group.

Findings: Initially, the local literacy programs were resistant to having the curriculum taught to their participants. It was found that the curriculum raised many personal issues, and to be responsive, the instructors often had to assume the role of nurse and case manager. The participants who had the lowest literacy skills also had the poorest health habits.

Many of the participants found learning in class (especially by role playing), trying the new knowledge at home, and discussing the results in the next class to be a compelling instructional approach. Self-reports indicated changes in attitudes and behavior, especially with respect to diet, child-rearing practices, and skills in accessing the health care system. Two of the four literacy providers who originally agreed to have the curriculum taught in their programs asked for subsequent presentations. The curriculum continues to be taught in local literacy programs.

Products: *Literacy for Health: Improving Health Literacy in the Inner City,* Final Report and Curriculum Modules (150 pp.); to be available through ERIC.

Contact: Beverly J. McElmurry, Professor of Nursing; University of Illinois at Chicago, 845 South Damen Ave., Rm. 1136; Chicago IL 60612–7350; PH: 312/996–3035; FAX: 312/996–8066; Internet address: cbm3460@uicvm.aiss.uic.edu

Steps to Success: Literacy Development in a Welfare-to-Work Program

Purpose:
To evaluate the impact of an Oregon welfare-to-work program on the long-term literacy development and self-sufficiency of participants.

Activities: Welfare recipients, without marketable skills but with at least about 6th grade reading and math skills, were assigned to career and life-planning instruction for approximately four weeks, and then to adult education for an average of 15 hours per week over four months. The adult education apparently focused more on math instruction than reading because of participants' relative weakness in that area. Subsequently, the participants were given job training and job placement services. Basic skills were assessed with a CASAS-based instrument prior to instruction and then again during the second quarter of 1993, about 1–3 years following participation in the program.

Findings: Participants' average reading scores rose from a relatively high 231.3 to 235.5. The math scores rose from 217.9 to 226.7, a moderately substantial gain. Of the participants who entered the program without a high school diploma, 28% had earned a GED by 1993. Forty-eight percent reported the program had made a difference in their getting a job, 77% said it had helped them gain control of their life, and 87% indicated it had improved their self-sufficiency. Forty-eight percent had officially recorded earnings during the second quarter of 1993, but for those the median earnings were only $1,649. Participants with relatively large math score gains were less likely to have received AFDC cash assistance in July of 1994.

These results are based on only 18 percent of the target population of program participants. The rest could not be reached or failed to cooperate. Comparisons of the two groups showed that they were similar in initial characteristics except that far fewer racial/ethnic minorities were involved in the follow-up data collection. Since it is possible the 18 percent differed additionally in subsequent characteristics, the representativeness of the findings is uncertain.

Products: *Steps to Success: Literacy Development on a Welfare-to-Work Program*, Final Report (63 pp.); to be available through ERIC.

Contact: Stephen Reder, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory; 101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500; Portland, Oregon 97204; PH: 503/275–9591; FAX: 503/275–9489.

Bronx Educational Services (BES)
National Training Center for Literacy Teachers

Purpose:
To revalidate BES's 1985 evaluation for the National Diffusion Network (NDN), evaluate its National Training Center for Literacy Teachers (NTC), and conduct technical assistance in two states.

Activities: BES replicated the 1985 NDN validation as a model program by administering the 1987 version of the TABE test to its students within the first 12 hours of instruction and post-testing after 100 hours of instruction. Careful and proper testing administration procedures were employed.

BES also conducted two five-day on-site "immersion" training institutes in March 1993 (for 30 practitioners new to BES) and April 1993 (for seven practitioners already acquainted with BES). As in the past, the NTC focused on the BES model, including nontraditional group instruction, a "generative words" reading/phonics approach, student involvement in programs, and theme-based teaching. Participants assessed the institute's effectiveness on a questionnaire. Follow-up mail and telephone surveys were also conducted to assess impacts over time from four 1991–92 BES training institutes.

Two states where BES had already developed strong relationships—Ohio and California—were chosen for more in-depth technical assistance (TA) and training by BES. Ohio's State Department of Adult Education selected 17 teachers to receive continuous TA on the elements of solid group instruction. BES provided training and TA to nine library and community-based programs in California. Several innovative methods of sustaining long distance staff development were piloted, including the use of videos and newsletters. Tailored training both in the states and on-site at BES were provided. BES also assessed the impacts of this TA.

Findings: This TABE pre-post retesting was not able to be used for NDN revalidation because, to compare results to the 1985 validation study, the "old" 1976 version of the TABE (significantly different than the newer 1987 version) would have to be used. BES plans to re-test with the 1976 version.

Questionnaires were returned by 64% of participants from the March training institute, and 83% from the April institute. On a 7–point scale, the institutes were considered outstanding (or close); a "6" or "7" ranking was given by 95% in March and 100% in April. The majority believed the institutes were relevant to the needs of literacy practitioners, had equipped them to use BES approaches, were "much better" than similar adult literacy conferences they had attended, and "would have a great impact on the adult literacy field". There was a rather low return rate on follow-up surveys from 1991–92 institutes, but respondents said they benefited from seeing a program "in action", were inspired by BES students' involvement at BES, and were now using many of the elements of the BES approach. The feedback from the TA in Ohio and California was positive. Many concrete changes in programs were documented as having resulted from this more tailored, in-depth on-site training.

Products: *BES National Training Center for Literacy Teachers. Final Report* (11 pp.); Appendices (77 pp.); ERIC # 372 300.

Contact: Patricia Medina; Bronx Educational Services; 965 Longwood Ave.; Bronx, New York; PH: 718/991–7310; FAX: 718/378–1071.

Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Projects

Purpose: To train community interns to teach participatory ESL and native language literacy in their own communities with the support of community-based teacher/mentors.

Activities: The project involved three community-based organizations—Jackson-Mann Community School, Harborside Community School, and Haitian Multi-service Center—each serving different linguistic groups. Each site selected an experienced bilingual mentor/teacher who selected and worked with two interns from the community who were refugees or immigrants. Selection criteria also included bilingualism, philosophical compatibility, some teaching experience, history of community involvement, and relationship with the site. Many interns previously or concurrently held jobs for which they were overskilled; some were GED students, and some university students; they ranged from former engineers to former teachers. Mentors supported interns to teach classes in native language (Haitian Creole and Spanish), and ESL. Interns taught 6 to 8 hours each week and were trained through a combination of: 1) university-based workshops; 2) modeling of mentors' classes; 3) support from mentors; and 4) "teacher-sharing"" meetings. The project promoted a participatory literacy approach that was meaning-making and context-based, rather than mechanics-based.

Findings: Training community-based interns represents a promising approach to literacy education for immigrants and refugees. Teaching native language before ESL addressed both the literacy and broader needs of learners and was critical for the transition to ESL. Use of meaning-based, contextual, and participatory approaches were found to be powerful tools for addressing literacy simultaneously with other student concerns, but were time-consuming and required skill to implement. Interns changed from traditional to new approaches and became ready for increased responsibility at different rates. They learned to identify needs, find and create teaching tools, facilitate discussions, and handle problematic issues. Many became increasingly involved in site and community work, and some changed their career plans as a result. The sites reported enhanced quality of instruction and increased the number of students served. Students gained self-confidence and skills in native and English language/meaning-making proficiency. More adequate paid time was needed for interns. Each of the sites continued the work of the project in some way after funding ended, but finding longer-term funds for ongoing programs was seen as critical to success.

Products: *From The Community To The Community: A Guidebook for Training Community Literacy Instructors.* Final Report (220 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 840.

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Contact: Dr. Elsa Auerbach, Project Coordinator; The University of Massachusetts – Boston; Boston, MA 02125; PH: 617/287-5763; FAX: 617/287-6511.

Literacy Theatre Staff Training for Practitioners

Purpose:
To evaluate the effectiveness and replicability of exploratory theatre for adult educator staff development.

Activities: The Northern New England Social Action Theatre was begun in 1984 to build awareness among adult educators about hard-to-discuss issues that students and programs face everyday. A scenario is dramatized using a prepared script combined with actor improvisation; the audience is then engaged by a skilled facilitator to question the characters about their feelings, choices, and motivations related to the issue presented. Ten different scenarios were presented, including such topics as: Student Intake, Sexual Harrassment in a Learning Center, Developmental Disabilities, Funding Issues, and Covering Up An Inability to Read.

Thirteen experienced trainers from the troupe were involved in this project. They ranged from State Directors of Adult Education to home tutors, and from teachers of ABE classes to administrators in libraries and JTPA offices. Trainers traveled to 13 national and regional adult education conferences. They presented four or more scenarios at the conferences, involving a total of 1,367 participants, with audience sizes ranging from 8 to 650. At seven of those conferences, 124 participants chose to attend the new follow-up workshop (from 4 to 35 per workshop). This four-hour workshop, initiated through the grant, was intended to train educators interested in using literacy theatre in their own work, related to their own programs' issues. By analyzing responses on questionnaires, an outside evaluator conducted an in-depth qualitative evaluation of the effectiveness and replicability of the scenario presentations and workshops.

Findings: The rate of return of questionnaires averaged 54%, considered a representative sample. Participants affirmed that the scenarios presented timely and important issues in adult education—issues that are "happening all around them" but are "difficult for people to talk about." They said that the theatre had influenced their work by helping them be "more aware of issues that impact on student behavior" and "more sensitive to students' needs", and better able to "monitor their own behavior". The issues they most often thought should be added to the repertoire were "multicultural conflicts" and "student motivation."" The researchers concluded that the greatest impact of the theatre was in awareness-building and examination of underlying attitudes and assumptions. The highest rating was given by 83% of respondents for "effectiveness of presenting issues," and 79% on "facilitators' successfulness in promoting discussions." The facilitator's skill was found to be key to success. Over 51% of workshop participants believed they had acquired sufficient skills to use exploratory theatre techniques in their own work. However, many wished the workshop would provide training materials and follow-up, and more "how-to" training (on writing scripts, facilitating interactive discussions, and training actors).

Products: *The Northern New England Social Action Theatre: An Evaluation* (57 pp.), Final Report (8 pp.); ERIC # 373 156.

Contact: Art Ellison, State Director; New Hampshire Department of Adult Education; 101 Pleasant St.; Concord, NH 03301; PH: 603/271–6698; FAX: 603/882–0069.

Outreach Training Center for Mandatory and Literacy Education

Purpose:
To develop a center to research literacy education needs and model programs, and provide materials, training, and technical assistance for educators in jails and correctional facilities.

Activities: The Correctional Education Association (CEA) set up its new Outreach and Training Center and began providing a range of services. Widespread research was conducted to identify current program models, materials and needs for mandatory and literacy education in correctional facilities. Results of this research were summarized in the project report. Materials were assembled and reviewed for inclusion in the Center's archives, then catalogued on a database. A handbook on assessment and instruction methods for correctional facility tutors was produced.

This new availability of information, training, and technical assistance was widely publicized. More than 300 requests for help from the Outreach Training Center were received and fulfilled. Training sessions on assessment methods, instructional methods and program evaluation were held in all eight regions of CEA, and at two national CEA conferences. Articles were written for corrections publications, and presentations were made at several national conferences.

Findings: The research for the archives produced many findings. Certain practices appeared to be effective, but no model literacy programs were found. At least six states were attempting to coordinate literacy service provision so there would be more learning continuity when inmates leave one facility for another. Life skills/literacy programs were the focus of the U.S. Department of Education's Correctional Education Office's latest grant competition, which offered the possibility of producing promising program models. Community corrections programs were growing and promising models were predicted to be forthcoming (such as the U.S. Department of Education's demonstration projects). Some exemplary family literacy programs were found (for example, where inmates learn parenting skills, and read to their children during visiting hours or by mailing tapes).

There was a paucity of good literacy programming in juvenile literacy programs. Very little information could be found on workplace literacy in correctional facilities. Few literacy programs used the prison libraries, including the legally-required law libraries. There was not a great demand for information on mandatory education by the State Directors of Corrections. Prison sites with Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) tutors found that there were difficulties recruiting tutors willing to work in these settings, as well as difficulties with literacy progress in sites where there is rapid turnover of inmates. Plans were underway with LVA and the American Jail Association to develop teaching strategies and tools for short-term inmates.

Products: *Starting From Scratch: Assessment and Instruction for Literacy Programs in Correctional Settings* (111 pp.); ERIC # 373 188. *Outreach Training Center Final Report* (9 pp.) with attachments (16 pp.), ERIC # 373 189.

Contact: Stephen Steurer, Executive Director; Correctional Educational Association; 8025 Laurel Lakes Ct., Laurel, MD 20707; PH: 301/490–1440; FAX: 301/206–5061.

Practitioner Research as Staff Development

Purpose:
To document the process of "practitioner research" (an inquiry-based approach) and its benefits for staff development in two programs.

Activities: In practitioner research, groups of practitioners choose and conduct research on questions of importance to them in their literacy work. Two organizations, involving 12 teachers and administrators, participated with Literacy South in this project—Alamance Community College (ACC) and the Piedmont Peace Project (PPP). They chose to work in very different ways. PPP practitioners wanted to work together in exploring questions, while ACC practitioners preferred to work on individually-chosen projects. Both programs facilitated their own group dialogue on their research. Literacy South assisted by providing the structure of the project, hosting meetings, sharing dialogue journals between the organizations, and offering technical assistance consultation with individuals. Literacy South also documented its own process of facilitating practitioner research through extensive journal-keeping, audiotape transcription of meetings, project documents, and interviews with all participants. A qualitative research report was produced that chronicles the process and includes recommendations for others wishing to use this approach.

Findings: Overall, practitioner research yielded very positive results as an approach to staff (and program) development. Though initially apprehensive, the 12 practitioners were energized by finding answers to their questions. They developed skills such as interviewing, working as a team, facilitating meetings, and executing projects. They learned how to focus a research question, choose appropriate research methods including qualitative methods, analyze data, interpret analyses, and report on findings. They asked compelling research questions, and produced findings useful in their own literacy work and for overall program development. They reported that the very fact that they took time to meet to discuss insights and impacts of their literacy work—a rare occurrence—was beneficial to them.

ACC had problems with group meeting attendance and facilitating their own work in a hierarchical environment. PPP had problems finding time to meet and agreeing on clear research questions. Practitioner research is a new concept. It takes time. Help from those with expertise was appreciated. Literacy South learned that a grant-funded practitioner research project resulted in project management needs that conflicted with the need for practitioners to be the owners and directors of their own process.

Products: *Innovative Training Practices: Practitioner Research as Staff Development. The Story of a Practitioner Research Project* (163 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 301. Also available at cost from Literacy South.

Contact: Dr. Hanna Arlene Fingeret or Dr. Andrew Pates; Literacy South; 331 West Main Street, Room 202; Durham, NC 27701; PH: 919/682–8108; FAX: 919/682–3598; Internet: litsouth@vnet.net.

The ABE Math Standards Project

Purpose:
To engage a team of teachers in examining the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) teaching and curriculum standards for use in adult basic education, and apply them in class through "teacher research."

Activities: The project's "Math Team" consisted of 20 teachers (most having had no prior math training) from a range of Massachusetts programs, facilitated by their project coordinators, staff from SABES and the Department of Education, and a teacher/researcher mentor. In four small work groups (ABE/basic literacy, ESL, GED, and workplace literacy), teachers assessed the NCTM standards' applicability for these four adult learning contexts and produced The ABE Math Standards Book. Each team member then tried applying a standard through investigation of an "inquiry question" with students. Inquiry questions covered a range of interests: linking math and science, using real-life contexts and materials, using nontraditional math games for class warm-ups, learning to learn, using physical "manipulatives" rather than rote memory, learning statistics and probability to view the world and news more critically, learning math better by writing about math, learning math skill while making a quilt, and constructing math problems with students. Most of the 20 "teacher-researchers" conducted their research individually but met together to clarify their inquiry questions, choose documentation methods, analyze results, and produce their book of research reports. They participated in a weekend retreat to personally experience nontraditional math curriculum. They began a circulating library (located in the trunks of their cars) to exchange materials at their meetings. At mid-project, they evaluated the process of teacher-research and its impact on them. They also produced a math teaching newsletter, The Problem Solver. At project's end, they presented their research findings to one another in a symposium.

Findings: The NCTM K–12 Standards were applicable to ABE but needed different rationales, phraseology, and applications. Slight variations were needed for ABE, ESL, GED and workplace education contexts. The four overarching principles guiding math for children applied equally well to adults—math as problem-solving, math as communication, math reasoning, and math connections. Teachers valued being co-investigators with students and exploring their own questions. Motivation was maintained by commitment to work groups, the excitement and challenges generated, compensation, networking, having fun with math, and the feeling of contributing to an important project. Pinpointing inquiry questions was hard, and the biggest problem was never having enough time. The teacher-researcher process resulted in changed teaching practices in math as well as in other content areas. Teachers who had not been trained in math became leaders of math teaching in Massachusetts in a relatively short period of time.

Products: *The Massachusetts Adult Basic Education Math Standards, Volume I* (61 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 297. *Implementing The Massachusetts Adult Basic Education Standards: Our Research Stories, Volume II* (253 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 298. *Mid-project Evaluation* (33 pp.); *Final Report* (4 pp.); *The Problem Solver* newsletters.

Contact: William Arcand; Holyoke Community College; 303 Homestead Ave.; Holyoke, MA 01040; PH: 413/538–7000; FAX: 413/534–4819; or Mary Jane Schmitt; Dept. of Education, 350 Main St., Malden, MA 02148–5023; PH: 617/388–3300, x364.

Family English Literacy Plus Program (FEL+)

Purpose:
To investigate the effects of adding computer assisted learning to an established family literacy and ESL program.

Activities: A total of 128 adult students in two communities near the Mexican border participated with their children in FEL+. Sessions were scheduled twice a week for three hours during the school year, and three times a week for three hours during the summer. Parents and children met together for a half-hour of joint literacy activities. Parents then went to ESL, GED, Parenting, or Citizenship classes, while the children received tutoring from college students. Fourteen portable Macintosh Powerbook computers were set up with software for word processing, typing skill tutorials, databases, ESL instruction, literacy instruction, parenting instruction, and educational games such as "Where in the USA is Carmen Santiago?" The computers were to be used in the class sessions and made available to be taken home by families in which both adult and child had completed the computer orientation, 10 hours of computer usage in the classes, and 50 hours of class time.

Findings: FEL+ succeeded in developing and implementing curriculum and activities that integrated technology-assisted instruction into the existing program, and in assessing the impact on families. However, about half of the adult participants never used the computers in the classes, and the other half made only limited use of them. Many reported at the end of the program that they did not like using computers or did not know how to use them. This appeared to be due partly to the very limited training in computer usage given to the instructors. Other problems were limited access to computers and insufficient electrical outlets in some classrooms. Those adults who did use computers rated that program component highly, and many participants indicated their willingness to use computers more frequently in the future.

The children used the computers frequently in class to improve their math, writing, and creative arts skills. Their higher usage was perhaps because the college tutors were more familiar with computers than the certified instructors who taught the adults. Due to the low usage by parents, most families did not meet the criteria for taking the computers home, and none were loaned out during the year of this demonstration.

Products: *Evaluation of the FEL+ Program. Final Report* (14 pp.); ERIC # FL 800 827.
ED 376744

Contact: Adriana Sanchez-Aldana; Resource Teacher; Sweetwater Division of Adult and Continuing Education; Adult Resource Center; 458 Moss St.; Chula Vista, CA 91911, PH: 619/691–5624, 5791; FAX: 619/425–8728.

Learn at Home: A Philadelphia Distance Learning Project

Purpose:
To test the impact of home-based on-line computer assisted instruction for accelerating the learning of ESL and ABE skills and introducing learners to computer technology.

Activities: A collaboration was formed by the Mayor's Commission on Literacy, Drexel University's Office of Computing Services, Bell of Pennsylvania, IMSATT Corporation, and eight literacy providers offering classroom instruction. Each provider was given twelve microcomputers to be placed in learners' homes and connected to IMSATT's mainframe CYBIS instructional software (formerly the Plato software developed by CDC).

Findings: The project required extensive collaboration between administrative, technical support, and direct service agencies. In order to ensure program success, the collaboration of the 12 organizations involved required lengthy negotiations. Placing computers in the homes of adult learners required consideration of adequate space, furniture, and phone lines. Protocols for logging onto the mainframe computer were unreliable at first and required extensive staff time to resolve. Access to timely transmission to the mainframe computer was undermined by slow modems and complicated telecommunication links. To resolve these problems, a $12 a month per learner charge had to be incurred. The software did not permit teachers and learners as much flexibility as had been represented by the vendor.

The learners generally liked the structure of the computerized lessons and testing, but experienced considerable frustration with the technical problems noted above. Usage of the system varied from one hour a week for some learners to up to six hours a day for others. In most households other family members and children logged onto educational exercises. The literacy providers who followed the prescribed model noted significant increases in class attendance, retention, and motivation in the classes using the computers. A few statistically significant gains in academic skills and self-esteem were found, but it is unclear how much the computer usage contributed to these gains.

Products: *Learn at Home: A Philadelphia Distance Learning Project. Final Report* (200 pp.), written to enable other agencies to implement a similar model and avoid the technical and pedagogical problems encountered here; ERIC # ED 373 157. Also available from AdvancE, Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Contact: Rose Brandt; Executive Director; Mayor's Commission on Literacy; 1500 Walnut Street; 18th Floor; Philadelphia PA 19102; PH: 215/685–6602; FAX: 215/735–6586.

Online Action Research (OAR) Project

Purpose:
To use action research to:
(1) examine the effectiveness of classroom practices in adult ESL and ABE programs;
(2) develop and use a variety of alternative assessment strategies;
(3) provide an alternative form of staff development;
(4) explore the use of networking technology (e–mail) to facilitate the research process; and
(5) create and disseminate an online database of language and literacy action research.

Activities: Twelve experienced adult education teachers (8 ESL, 2 ABE, and 2 GED) worked in pairs to conduct classroom-centered research and systematically collected and reported research processes and results. CASAS research facilitators provided technical assistance to teachers, introducing the action research process and providing support to conduct their research, develop assessment strategies, and analyze findings. OAR teachers selected research topics and questions by stepping back from their roles as teachers and (1) reflecting on who they taught, how they taught, and what changes they would like to make in their own teaching behaviors, (2) testing their hypotheses, and (3) clarifying and modifying their questions as they progressed.

Because the teachers worked in different cities in northern and central California, computer-supported collaboration on e–mail gave the teachers an opportunity to develop and refine their research projects jointly. The technology facilitator from the Outreach Technical Assistance Network provided training to all project participants in the use of computers. The teachers recorded their research summaries and reflections on the action research process on the OAR database.

Findings: OAR teachers reported an increased awareness of and need for classroom assessment and came to appreciate action research as a means of professional growth. One of the greatest benefits was the ongoing change in teachers' attitudes toward the importance of assessing student learning outcomes. The OAR project raised teachers' awareness and concern about whether their students were making real progress. They also became aware of the need for good and appropriate assessment instruments. They tried, many for the first time, such methods as writing assessment, performance-based assessment, journals, portfolios, logs, and surveys. The teachers made interesting and insightful comments about their students' progress but found it more difficult to systematically collect and analyze the data in order to document progress.

OAR teachers reported that action research provided them with a way to make the classroom experience concrete in order to see it more clearly and improve upon it. Action research gave value to teachers' everyday experiences in the classroom and provided a legitimate forum for the teachers' voice to be heard. Teachers' access to and implementation of e–mail was generally difficult but proved valuable. Collaborating with others on research topics provided the teachers with encouragement and support.

Products: *Online Action Research (OAR) Project. Final Report* (30 pp.), Printout of the Online Action Research Database, which contains material on the project process and research summaries (288 pp.), Macintosh diskette of OAR Database; ERIC # ED 372 302. The OAR Database can be accessed online via CONNECT or INTERNET.

Contact: Linda Taylor, Program Manager, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS); 8910 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.; San Diego, CA 92123; PH: 619/292–2900, ext. 333; FAX: 619/292–2910; Internet address: oarcasas@connectinc.com

Assessment of Workplace Literacy

Purpose:
To develop and document alternative techniques for assessing literacy capabilities and needs within organizations—techniques that involve workers and management, that respect the dignity of workers and do not embarrass them, and that objectively assess the needs of an organization without assuming that a "basic skills" program is the only route to a more productive workplace.

Activities: This research project was planned to produce a definitive handbook on alternative assessment techniques for workplace literacy. The intention was to find a way to understand organization context so that employees' capabilities could be assessed in that context. Project staff researched six state government organization work sites, interviewing workers, observing them on the job, and involving them in focus groups to get feedback on preliminary project reports.

Findings: In the course of their research, project staff determined that the up-front organizational assessment for workplace literacy should be part of an ongoing collaborative process in which all stakeholders are helped to ask critical questions about skills upgrading and organizational barriers and incentives to learning. This form of assessment was seen as an ideal way to build a foundation for long-range planning. Consequently, findings were presented in *Asking New Questions,* a report that raises and discusses questions that can help guide other organizations in finding effective approaches to workplace literacy: Questions included were: how does the organization's history affect the approach to workplace literacy? With regard to theoretical framework, what definition of literacy is guiding the approach? What is being assessed and for what purpose? In the context of the workplace, what are the steps and methods for conducting an organizational assessment? What principles should guide assessment strategies? Finally, how do workers perceive their learning needs? Are their perceptions different from other stakeholders in the organization? What are the social and organizational barriers and incentives to learning? What can the organization do to reduce barriers and increase incentives for learning? How will assessment keep up with ongoing changes and variations within the organization?

Project staff also arrived at two general observations about workplace education: (1) workers need to be involved in all phases of program development, which requires an atmosphere or respect, ownership, flexibility, and an open labor-management relationship that literacy practitioners cannot always affect or influence; (2) for a program to be successful, all stakeholders—from workers to top administrators—need to buy in to the goals and methods, which is especially difficult to effect where different interests are at stake. Key advice to educators was: act as "consultants" and guide rather than direct; involve the front-line supervisor throughout; find the right combination to unlock the particular organization, but don't compromise on what it takes to run a quality program.

Products: *Assessment of Workplace Literacy: Asking New Questions. Project Reach. Skills for Success* , Final Report (66 pp.) ERIC # ED 372 286. Also available from Labor Education Action Program.

Contact: Ira Baumgarten, Director; Labor Education Action Program; 1 Lear Jet Lane, Suite 3; Latham NY 12110–2393; PH: 518/785–4669; FAX: 518/785–4854.

Basic Skills and Job Retention

Purpose:
To develop a cost-effective model of delivering worksite literacy instruction to small businesses.

Activities: A community college's existing ABE and migrant farmworker programs were supplemented with a four-week pre-employment training program, job search assistance, follow-up support services, and worksite literacy tutoring. Twenty-four small local businesses were surveyed about the characteristics they look for when hiring workers for unskilled positions. The pre-employment training included an analysis of participants' occupational interests, instruction and practice in goal setting, an introduction to various resources for job searching, preparation of a resume, practice in filling out job applications and being interviewed, and general information on work ethics. Tutors were recruited from an existing Learn to Read tutoring program that provides volunteers with nine hours of training in the Laubach approach. The volunteers were given two hours of additional training, which focused on characteristics of migrant farmworkers, workplace literacy demands, and general tutoring strategies.

Findings: The results of the survey of small businesses showed that employers primarily seek dependability and punctuality when hiring people for unskilled positions. Eleven migrant farmworkers who were nearing the end of their GED or vocational studies participated in the pre-employment training program. The learners rated the training quite highly. Assessments made before and after the training indicate that participants felt better prepared afterwards to set goals, use several means of looking for a job, and handle themselves in an interview. There was also a modest increase in the already high sense of work ethic. The project was in operation during poor economic conditions, and only a few participants secured jobs over the duration of the project. They already had good literacy and workplace skills, and no additional literacy tutoring was needed.

Products: *Basic Skills and Job Retention. Final Report* (50 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 287. *Getting Ahead . . . and Staying There: Pre-employment Class Student Manual,* ERIC # ED 372 280. *Getting Ahead and Staying There: Workplace Literacy Tutor Manual,* ERIC # ED 372 281.

Contact: Harriet L. Little, Adult Basic Education Coordinator; Seminole Community College, 100 Weldon Blvd., Sanford, FL 32773; PH: 407/328–2117; FAX: 407/328–2128.

Precision Strike Workplace Literacy

Purpose:
To modify an existing workplace literacy program by customizing instruction to individual employees' job needs in order to prepare the workforce for a "lean manufacturing" environment. These environments are characterized by flexible automated machinery, skilled team work, and customized products.

Activities: Vance-Granville Community College in North Carolina and the National Alliance of Business (NAB) worked with CertainTeed Corporation to customize part of its workplace literacy program to the functional contexts of specific jobs. Considerable job task analysis and needs assessment was done by observing workers in their jobs, interviewing workers and supervisors, conducting an "Employee Learning Preferences Survey," analyzing written material used on the job, and testing workers' basic skills. Computer-assisted instructional software and self-paced workbooks were prepared for each job category and used along with conventional classroom instruction.

Findings: Scores on various basic skills tests favored the Precision Strike training over the conventional literacy program training. Job performance indicators such as run rates and waste rates showed mixed results, with some favoring the Precision Strike group and some favoring the conventional program group. The Precision Strike group reduced their complaint rate for one product considerably more than the conventional group, but the complaint rates for other products were not reported. Both the Precision Strike and conventional groups performed far better than the group with no or minimal basic skills training. Precision Strike participants unanimously reported that the program had enhanced their math skills on the job, while only a few reported improvements in reading or writing; the participants in the conventional literacy program were not similarly queried. The company now conducts job-linked training which is based on the Precision Strike training, but rather than targeting entire crews and providing simultaneous training for several different jobs, it trains people for one job at a time, starting at the highest levels.

Products: *Precision Strike Workplace Literacy Training at CertainTeed Corporation in Partnership with Vance-Granville Community College and the National Alliance of Business*, Final Report (13 pp.); ERIC # ED 372 285. *Precision Strike Training in Lean Manufacturing* (155 pp.), a guidebook providing step-by-step suggestions for planning and implementing workplace literacy programs that are customized to job requirements; available from NAB.

Contact: Hina Nassiri, NAB, 1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20005–3917; PH: 202/289–2913; FAX: 202/289–1303; or Jenifer Coplin; Project Coordinator; 6071 Bob Daniel Road, Oxford, NC 27536; PH: 919/603–1878.

Team Evaluation of Workplace Literacy Programs

Purpose:
To develop and demonstrate the use of collaborative stakeholder teams to plan and conduct evaluations of workplace literacy programs.

Activities: Project staff field-tested a team-based evaluation methodology in seven workplace education programs. The team approach involved key program stakeholders in a process of (1) building an education team; (2) clarifying what information the team would like to generate in an evaluation; (3) collecting, organizing, analyzing, and reporting findings; and (4) taking necessary follow-up action. The aim was to explore the premise that internal stakeholder evaluations could produce information meaningful to those stakeholders and in keeping with continuous improvement.

Findings: Six of the evaluation teams collected and analyzed new kinds of information that generally led to changes in program operations and greater stakeholder support for the programs. Problems included difficulties in agreeing on how to proceed, inadequate evaluation skills of team members, breaches of confidentiality, work schedule conflicts, and the need for more time than anticipated.

The project produced three documents. In "Workplace Education: Stakeholders' Expectations, Practitioners' Responses, and the Role Evaluation Might Play," investigators review the evolving nature of the workplace. They discuss the movement from rigid production lines to "high performance workplaces" characterized by work teams with flexible job assignments, broad responsibilities for solving problems, and continuous learning by all employees. They outline the implications of this transition for workplace ESL and literacy programs, suggesting that a more collaborative interpretation of "functional context" is needed for high performance workplaces. Finally they suggest the implications of this transition for the evaluation of workplace programs.

In "Team Evaluation: Case Studies from Seven Workplace Education Programs," the investigators report their efforts to demonstrate how teams composed of representatives of workplace stakeholder groups can plan and conduct their own internal evaluations.

In "Team Evaluation: A Guide for Workplace Education Programs," lessons in the demonstrations are incorporated into a step-by-step guide for implementing this approach to evaluation. The guide discusses how to form a team, clarify goals, establish quality standards for program components, collect information, analyze it, and report results.

Products: *Workplace Education: Stakeholders' Expectations, Practitioners' Responses, and the Role Evaluation Might Play;* ERIC # ED 372 282; *Team Evaluation: Case Studies from Seven Workplace Education Programs,* ERIC # ED372 283; *Team Evaluation: A Guide for Workplace Education Programs,* ERIC # ED 372 284. Also available through Literacy Partnerships.

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